CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND FOURTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 4 July 1989, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Luvsandorjiin Bayart (Mongolia)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 514th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament. At the outset, may I extend to the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics - on the Conference's and my own behalf - our sincere condolences on the passing away of His Excellency Andrei Gromyko, former Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and Minister for Foreign Affairs, a distinguished statesman who had remarkable influence on developments during the post-war period, and made outstanding personal contributions to the maintenance of peace and international security. He participated in the opening meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, the predecessor of this Conference, on 14 March 1962, and was closely involved in the most important issues of disarmament. Allow me also to request the Soviet delegation to convey to its Government and the family of the deceased our sympathy in such trying circumstances.

I should like now to extend a warm welcome in the Conference to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Excellency Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, who will be the first speaker at this plenary meeting. The Minister for Foreign Affairs is well known to all of us, since he has periodically visited the Conference to present the views of his Government on subjects on our agenda. His interest in our work led him to preside over the Conference at the opening meeting of the Iranian presidency on 1 September 1988.

I wish also to extend warm thanks, on behalf of the Conference, to Ambassador García Robles of Mexico for his effective and able presidency during the month of June, the responsibilities of which he discharged for the second time during his tenure as representative of Mexico to the Conference. His experience as dean of the representatives to the Conference and his diplomatic competence and skill were determinant elements in the success of his presidency.

Before continuing with our business for today, allow me, distinguished delegates, to make a brief opening statement in my capacity as President of the Conference on Disarmament for the month of July.

Exactly 20 years ago, at the first 1969 meeting of the enlarged Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament - the predecessor of our Conference - my country, the Mongolian People's Republic, began to participate in the work of this sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. By coincidence, on the anniversary of our 20 years' participation, I have the great honour and privilege of presiding over the Conference on Disarmament. The statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Mongolian People's Republic on 2 July 1969 pointed out that Mongolia, as a member of the then Committee on Disarmament, would spare no efforts to strengthen universal peace and security by promoting the implementation of effective disarmament measures and patiently exploring ways and means of bringing the various positions closer together. Today, we reaffirm that my country remains true to what it pledged on the day of its admission to this highly important disarmament negotiating body.

(The President)

In assuming the presidency of the Conference for the month of July, I should like to assure you that with your co-operation and kind assistance I shall do my best to accomplish the tasks before the Conference.

In view of the positive international developments which have taken place in the past few years, the Conference on Disarmament is duty-bound to intensify its work on a number of issues before it. In that connection, I wish to recall the importance of the efforts undertaken by the representative of Japan, Ambassador Yamada, in his consultations to develop an organizational arrangement for agenda item 1, entitled "Nuclear test ban". I would venture to say that Ambassador Yamada has gone a long way towards reconciling all positions. I am sure that we can count on the co-operation of all members to bring the consultations to a positive conclusion, and I should like to invite Ambassador Yamada to continue his dialogue with the item "Co-ordinators and other delegations". I remain available, of course, to assist in those consultations. I intend also to continue the consultations to find appropriate organizational frameworks to deal with items 2, 3 and 7 of our agenda, namely, "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament", "Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters", and "New types of weapons of mass destruction and new sytems of such weapons". With regard to other items of the agenda where the Conference has established subsidiary organs, I wish to draw the attention of the Conference to the fact that July is a demanding period of substantive work before we all proceed to the drafting of our annual report. Hence, I ask the Chairmen of the Ad Hoc Committees to do their utmost to intensify the work on substance in their respective Committees during this part of the session. We should also not lose sight of the need to continue our consideration of the improved and effective functioning of the Conference, as well as of the question of expansion of its membership. I will pursue consultations on these important topics with the group Co-ordinators.

I wish to recall also that, on 18 July, the Conference will hold an informal meeting to consider further measures in the field of disarmament for the prevention of an arms race on the sea-bed, the ocean floor and the subsoil thereof. This informal meeting will continue on 20 July if additional delegations would like to express views at the end of the first discussion devoted to the matter. Invitations to States parties non-members of the Conference are now being sent out by the Secretariat.

That concludes my opening statement.

I should like now to proceed to other business. The Conference starts today its consideration of agenda item 5, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". However, in accordance with rule 30 of the rules of procedure, any member wishing to do so may raise any subject relevant to the work of the Conference. I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the German Democratic Republic.

I now give the floor to the first speaker on my list, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Excellency Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati.

Mr. VELAYATI (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, at the outset, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament for the month of July. I assure you of my delegation's full co-operation with you and other members of the Bureau.

In recent years, it has been a pleasure for me to present the views of my Government in this august body. This is a commitment which stems from our belief that international peace and security can be enhanced only through reduction and elimination of the causes of insecurity, namely, armaments and belligerency. The Conference on Disarmament and its predecessors were founded to fulfil humanity's resolve to prevent wars after the bitter experience of the two world wars. My country's special commitment to disarmament is also rooted in the experience of our people during the war of aggression waged against us by our neighbour and its collaborators. We share the experience of the victims of world wars and thus share their belief in the necessity of peace and disarmament.

The year 1988 marked rising hopes and expectations throughout the world both in the field of disarmament and resolution of conflicts, with the ratification of the treaty for elimination of a category of nuclear weapons, the establishment of a cease-fire between Iran and Iraq in accordance with the resolution of the Security Council, the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan and sustained efforts to bring to an end debilitating regional conflicts in southern Africa and Indo-China.

In 1989, however, the momentum has not been kept up and prospects are not bright and encouraging. In the field of conflict resolution, almost one year has elapsed since the establishment of a cease-fire between Iran and Iraq, and other provisions of Security Council resolution 598 adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter remain unimplemented. Even withdrawal to the internationally recognized boundaries ordered by the Council along with a cease-fire as a mandatory "first step towards a negotiated settlement" has not yet materialized, and Iraq continues to occupy, in defiance of Security Council resolution 598 and international law, more than 2,000 square kilometres of Iranian territory. The failure of Iraq to comply with the most prominent provision of resolution 598 has escalated tension. The Security Council shoulders great responsibility not only to ensure compliance with resolution 598 as called for under paragraph 10 of the resolution, but also in its capacity as the primary organ of the United Nations charged with maintenance of international peace and security.

The process of disarmament has undergone a period of resurgence in recent years. Indeed, the disappointment and scepticism that had relegated arms control to the back-burner of international politics in the early 1980s has been replaced by public optimism and even a small dose of euphoria. This development has led to, and is fuelled by, the first nuclear arms elimination agreement in the history of mankind, namely, the INF Treaty. Other agreements such as the Stockholm Accord, an offspring of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), or the establishment of nuclear risk reduction centres by the two super-Powers underline the new dynamic in arms control. The expression of satisfaction over the conclusion of the INF Treaty was a reflection of an earnest hope for immediate realization of more substantial

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achievements in the field of disarmament. Because INF by itself, even if implemented completely, will only eliminate up to 4 per cent of the present nuclear arsenals. Here, I wish to express concern arising from talks about modernization of nuclear weapons as well as strenghtening of conventional forces.

One of the most significant items on the agenda of this negotiating body is the elimination of chemical weapons. The horrors of chemical warfare were hardly remembered in 1980. Yet, the 1980s became a turning point in the banalization of chemical weapons and their treatment as conventional ones. The almost unabated and indiscriminate use of these weapons of mass destruction by Iraq in the course of its war of aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran added yet another frightening dimension; that is, even this despicable method of warfare and genocide can be employed almost with impunity in a world dominated by political expediency. Repeated warnings by the Islamic Republic of Iran, reports by international mass media, and even eight reports produced by United Nations teams of experts did not create any genuine reaction by the international diplomatic community, or even the States parties to the Geneva Protocol of 1925. And in this atmosphere of silence and acquiescence, the world witnessed a quantitative and qualitative intensification of chemical warfare by Iraq.

Chemical warfare started with sporadic use of chemical weapons in limited areas and developed into a regular method of warfare. The victims, who in 1981 were a limited number of Iranian soldiers, grew in numbers, and finally engulfed innocent Iranian civilians in Sardasht. The emotional report of United Nations specialists witnessing the martyrdom of chemically wounded children did not move the custodians of international peace, security, law and human rights. Had they reacted differently, the Iraqi régime might have been deterred from resorting to such a massive chemical attack in its genocide in Halabja. The chemical agent with which Iraq started its chemical warfare was simple mustard gas. However, they gradually moved on to technologically sophisticated nerve gas and agents such as Sarin and Suman. This development is not only significant because of the vast difference in toxicity, but also because of the significant change in the required technology. Sarin cannot be produced with the normal equipment of pesticide plants. It is evident, therefore, that the technology for the production of these agents was supplied to Iraq, regrettably, in the course of the war and certainly after the Iraqi policy of chemical warfare had become public knowledge.

The delivery system of chemical weapons had an even more dramatic development. According to the report of the United Nations team, in 1984, the delivery system was so imperfect that many of the chemical bombs did not even operate. By 1986, this shortcoming had already been overcome. In addition, spray tanks, and more importantly surface-to-surface missiles carrying chemical agents, were introduced, once again proving the complicity of others in the criminal development of the Iraqi chemical war machine.

The Halabja chemical massacre shocked international public opinion and created the expectation that effective measures would be taken in order to reverse the conventional approach of indiscriminate use of chemical weapons. Against this background, and following the establishment of a cease-fire

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between Iran and Iraq, the Paris Conference was announced. But in a bid to pre-empt any action against the culprit, the Iraqi Foreign Minister in an interview with a Kuwaiti paper on the eve of the Conference threatened that he would reveal the names of European suppliers of chemical agents and technology to Iraq, if those countries persisted in their pressure against Iraq. The blackmail was so effective that the Conference did not even name the culprit. It is, therefore, not surprising to see that although the Paris Conference called on the Conference on Disarmament to redouble its efforts for the speedy conclusion of a convention banning chemical weapons, no agreement has been reached in CD even for minor improvements such as changing the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee to add "prohibition of use" in the title of the convention being negotiated.

What is really needed for the speedy conclusion of a comprehensive, global and effectively verifiable convention is a strong political will by all parties. Our collective efforts should be directed towards total and absolute elimination of chemical weapons through the early conclusion of a convention enjoying universal adherence. Interim measures such as non-proliferation of chemical weapons will not serve the objective of abolishing chemical weapons and preventing their use. In this connection, the order of destruction envisaged in the convention should include qualitative and quantitative aspects of these weapons. The order of destruction should give priority to destruction of the most lethal ones such as nerve gas, and not start with mustard gas, which because of its obsoleteness will have to be destroyed sooner or later. The big Powers should prove their genuine will by acting indiscriminately in this direction. The Canberra Conference should also refrain from acting towards non-proliferation of chemical weapons, since that will adversely affect the work of our Conference in Geneva. In order to ensure the universality of the convention, it is necessary to provide incentives, and in this respect article 10 plays a key role. Assistance to victims of chemical weapons should be automatic and mandatory, because any delay in providing assistance such as antidotes, medical care and first aid would cost human lives. Another area which still needs to be specified is punitive measures against States parties which may breach the convention.

The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that it is of paramount importance for international peace and security to free the Middle East from nuclear arsenals. The General Assembly has, every year, called for the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. However, the Zionist entity, which has developed its nuclear capability in collaboration with South Africa and certain Western Powers remains an obstacle for the realization of the common objective of the people of this region.

The Indian Ocean and its natural extensions should also be free from nuclear weapons and from the rivalry of outside Powers. The attack on an Iranian civil airliner exactly a year ago, as well as other acts of aggression by the United States fleet in the Persian Gulf against the Islamic Republic of Iran, are sad manifestations of a foreign presence in our important region. The security of the Persian Gulf is the sole responsibility of the littoral States, and foreign navies, which have brought nothing but disaster and insecurity, should abandon their self-assigned role as policemen of the region.

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The mandate of the Conference on Disarmament includes adoption of effective international measures to assure the non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. But so far, there has been no progress in arriving at a legally binding common and substantive negative security assurance of a global nature. The Ad hoc Committee on Negative Security Assurance has not been able to reach any common ground in its worthy objective. This situation may give rise to a perception that by signing the NPT, countries have left themselves without protection against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. In fact, the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT have honoured their obligation, while the nuclear-weapon States have failed to fulfil their commitments. The consequence is the current race to obtain nuclear weapons capability by semi-developed States, with all its adverse social and economic effects on these States.

The realization of the lofty and vital objectives for which this Conference was established requires more political will, insight and multilateral efforts and less double standards and political expediency. The destiny of mankind, which is increasingly threatened by these inhuman weapons of mass destruction, requires no less.

The PRESIDENT: I thank his Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his important statement and for the kind words that he addressed to the Presidency. I now give the floor to the representative of the German Democratic Republic, Ambassador Dietze.

Mr. DIETZE (German Democratic Republic): At the very outset, I should like to join others in expressing our deep condolences to the Soviet delegation on the passing away of Andrei Andreevich Gromyko.

Sir, allow me to congratulate you upon your assumption of your high office. I do this with particular pleasure as you represeent a country with which the German Democratic Republic, throughout its existence, has enjoyed close and friendly relations. Your accession as President of the Conference reflects the active part Mongolia is playing in the development of peaceful international co-operation between States. Your accession to this post also mirrors the personal commitment you display in the quest for arms limitation and disarmament. Highly valued are your determined efforts, as Chairman of the Outer Space Committee, to make headway in the prevention of an arms race in outer space. I wish you much success in the discharge of your responsible duties and can assure you of my delegation's fullest support in this endeavour.

Having the floor, let me also take this opportunity to commend the former President, Ambassador García Robles, your predecessor. I think he deserves our appreciation and gratitude for his competence and special negotiating skills, which helped create the necessary conditions for resuming the work of our Conference.

At today's plenary debate, the prevention of an arms race in outer space is at issue. This problem justifiably occupies a central place in our work. The commitment to the pursuit of peace makes it necessary to end the arms race on earth and to prevent it from spilling over into outer space. The recently resumed Soviet-American negotiations must for our point of view make a

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contribution to this end - while strictly adhering to the ABM Treaty as it was signed in 1972. We, too, have to pull our weight in order that the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space may be achieved. For eight years now the prevention of an arms race in outer space has been on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. The Outer Space Committee established for this purpose has been dealing with this question for almost five years. A good many efforts have been undertaken to get things going. A quite considerable number of proposals are on the table. We all know of the problems which urgently call for a solution. We feel that it is time to get down to business notwithstanding all the obstacles, i.e. to set about concrete work with regard to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The German Democratic Republic is in favour of concluding effective and verifiable agreements on the prohibition of the development, testing and deployment of weapons in space. No doubt there do exist reservations, and differences on the roads to be followed to this end have not been bridged. But should this hinder us from fully harnessing the potential for agreement and searching for a step-by-step solution to the existing problems?

The consideration of confidence-building measures, in our view, offers the chance to impart strong momentum to the Outer Space Committee. We think that it would serve confidence-building if the international exchange of information was expanded. The concrete discussion of the proposal advanced by France concerning the "code of conduct" and that of the Federal Republic of Germany regarding the "rules of the road" would also help build confidence. What is of interest, in our opinion, is Poland's idea of considering a separate protocol to be appended to the 1975 Convention on Registration providing for the extension of data exchange and ad hoc inspections of announced launches into outer space. The German Democratic Republic also endorses the appeal made by Argentina to all States to declare whether they have any weapons deployed in outer space. The implementation of the Soviet proposal concerning the establishment of an international system of verification of the non-deployment of weapons of any kind in outer space would eventually constitute a significant confidence-building measure from our point of view. In so doing, it would, in fact, be possible to forestall the introduction of important categories of weapons in space as well as their components. In our opinion, such confidence-building measures augur well for bringing about mutually acceptable agreements.

It is along these lines that the German Democratic Republic and the Mongolian People's Republic tabled in 1987 a document containing the main provisions for a treaty on the prohibition of antisatellite weapons and on ways to ensure the immunity of space objects. To follow up this initiative, I should like to submit today a proposal specifying ASAT components and ways of verifying their prohibition. Here we are drawing on the debate so far conducted concerning ASAT weapons. In this context, I especially have in mind the suggestions made by Sweden, and I also have in mind the proposal advanced by India, with respect to an outline of an agreement that would commit all States not to develop, produce or acquire, test or deploy ASAT weapons.

The document before us, which was presented by my delegation, document CD/927, "ASAT components and ways of verifying their prohibition", comments on the problems of definition and categorization of ASAT weapons. At the same time, it indicates possibilities for effective verification of

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future agreements. This proposal stems from the fact that the technological development of so-called conventional ASAT weapons is highly advanced and the prohibition of these weapons is of particular urgency. For this reason, document CD/927 deals with important categories of that group of ASAT systems, such as: space-based chemical rockets and mass accelerators; ground-based chemical rockets and mass accelerators; and space mines and collision bodies. We believe that the considerations pinpointed in this paper could help advance the discussion of: the kinds of space weapons or components; the measures required to prevent such weapons; the description of the weapons and their stage of development; and the type of verification. These are undoubtedly comprehensive and complex issues, for the discussion of which the involvement of scientific experts from our point of view is imperative. The proposals for setting up an expert group to look into relevant scientific and technological questions will therefore receive our unqualified support also in future.

For a long time the pros and cons of international organizations and institutions have been deliberated which could help verify compliance with disarmament accords by means of outer space technology. We think that the Soviet initiative on the setting up of an international space inspectorate, the Canadian PAXSAT concept, the French proposal on the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency and the proposal of the USSR to establish a world space organization deserve to be discussed in depth with the aim that an overall structure be finally created.

At this juncture, let me refer to the proposal for joint European satellite observation, which is contained in the joint initiative of the Socialist Unity Party of the German Democratic Republic and the Social Democratic Party of the Federal Republic of Germany for the creation of a zone of confidence and security in Central Europe. It is likely that it could form part of an international satellite monitoring agency. Interesting in this context would, finally, be the ideas advanced by the United Nations Secretary-General in terms of a multilateral international alert system.

After all, it is obvious that there is indeed no lack of substance in the work of the Outer Space Committee. As for the agenda item "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" our delegation deems it important that the gap between general debates and a more structured and intensive work be bridged. We feel that substantive discussions leading us to negotiations should be started in fields where common ground could probably be found. Political will and readiness for compromise, together with an accommodating approach by all parties, are certainly required in this endeavour. My delegation is prepared to make a distinctive contribution to this effect.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of the German Democratic Republic for his statement and for the cordial words he has addressed to me and to my country.

That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other representative wish to take the floor at this stage? I recognize the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union, Mr. Batsanov.

Mr. BATSANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics): Thank you, Comrade President. The Soviet delegation will have another opportunity, when it makes its planned statement shortly, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference, and also to thank Ambassador García Robles, who was President of the Conference in June. I have asked for the floor today to express our gratitude to you, Comrade President, and to all the distinguished delegates who have offered us their condolences on the death of Andrei Andreevich Gromyko. We will pass these words of sympathy on to Moscow.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for his statement. Are there any other speakers? That does not seem to be the case. That concludes our business for today. I intend now to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 6 July at 10 a.m.

The plenary meeting stands adjourned.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.